

What is claimed is:

1. A method of treating unwanted skin conditions associated with the production of sebum comprising:

introducing an exogenous chromophore to sebaceous glands, wherein the chromophore absorbs laser light having a wavelength between about 700 nm to about 1200 nm

irradiating the target sebaceous glands with laser light having a wavelength between about 700 nm to about 1200 nm for a time sufficient to inhibit sebum production.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of introducing an exogenous chromophore to sebaceous glands includes topically applying a chromophore in a lipid suspension such that said chromophore is selectively introduced to sebaceous glands.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said lipid suspension comprises water, a pharmaceutically acceptable oil, and at least one surfactant.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein said lipid suspension comprises liposomes containing said chromophore.

5. The method of claim 2, wherein said chromophore is a dye.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein said dye preferably is selected from the group consisting of indocyanine green, Rhodamine B and cresyl violet.

7. A method of reducing sebum secretion comprising the steps of:

a) selectively introducing a chromophore to sebaceous glands; and,

b) irradiating said sebaceous glands with laser light of a wavelength that is essentially transmitted by the outer layers of human skin and is strongly absorbed by said chromophore, said irradiating being performed at a light fluence and for a time sufficient to disrupt sebaceous gland function such that sebum secretion is reduced.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein said selectively introducing a chromophore to sebaceous glands comprises the step of topically applying a chromophore in a lipid suspension such that said chromophore is selectively introduced to sebaceous glands.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein said laser light is produced by a diode laser.

10. The method of claim 7 wherein said laser is pulsed, with a pulse duration of about 1-100 msec, and said laser light has a fluence of about 5 to about 40 J/cm².

11. A method of reducing the severity of acne, comprising the steps of:

a) selectively introducing a chromophore to sebaceous glands; and,

b) irradiating said sebaceous glands with laser light of a wavelength that is essentially transmitted by the outer layers of human skin and is strongly absorbed by said chromophore, said irradiating being performed at a light fluence and for a time sufficient to disrupt sebaceous gland function such that the severity of said acne is reduced.

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17. The method of claim 16 where the glycolic acid solution is neutralized using a neutralizing agent.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein said neutralizing agent is selected from the group consisting of water, bicarbonate, and GLYTONE.

19. The method of claim 15 wherein said glycolic acid solution is removed by washing the target skin area with water.

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